

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



### NEWS RELEASE

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### Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #20

**GILLNET FISHERIES:** Deep gear has been permitted in the Coghill, Eshamy, Montague, and Unakwik districts since Monday, July 2.

**BERING RIVER DISTRICT:** The Bering River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, July 9 for a 48-hour period. An aerial survey of the Bering River District was conducted last Friday under generally poor conditions. Another survey of the Bering River District is anticipated to be flown when weather permits.

**COPPER RIVER DISTRICT:** The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, July 9 for a 48-hour period. The cumulative sonar count to date is 951,912 fish whereas the minimum anticipated count to date is 526,303 fish. The preliminary harvest estimate from the 48-hour period that closed on Wednesday, July 4 is 154,000 sockeye salmon with 490 deliveries reported. This compares to an anticipated harvest 54,700 sockeye salmon for this period. The Gulkana Hatchery sockeye salmon harvest contribution from the fishing period that closed on June 22 was 34%. For the week ending June 30, the Western Copper River Delta survey count was 5,411 versus a minimum anticipated goal of 4,968 sockeye salmon. Survey conditions on the Eastern Copper River Delta were fair to poor. An aerial survey of the Copper River Delta is anticipated to be flown when weather permits.

**MONTAGUE DISTRICT:** The Port Chalmers Subdistrict will open for an 60-hour period beginning at 8:00 am on Monday, July 9 with an additional 84-hour period anticipated to begin at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 12. This schedule is anticipated to remain in effect until further notice. The western boundary of the Port Chalmers Subdistrict is defined by lines from 60° 20.00' N., 147° 26.59' W. to 60° 14.75' N., 147° 35.35' W. to 60° 02.50' N., 147° 44.41' W. Regulatory closed waters and anadromous stream closures within the Port Chalmers Subdistrict will not be in effect until further notice. Harvest for the period that closed on Wednesday, July 4 was 84,300 chum salmon with 136 deliveries reported.

**COGHILL DISTRICT:** The Coghill District, excluding the Granite Bay, Esther, and Bettles Bay Subdistricts, and **excluding waters south of a latitude line at 60° 46.10' N.**, will open to commercial **drift gillnet** harvest for a 48-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 9. The Granite Bay Subdistrict, **Esther Subdistrict, north of a latitude line at 60° 46.10' N.**, and **WNH THA, east of a longitude line at 148° 3.63' W.**, will open to commercial **drift gillnet** harvest for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 9. **The WNH SHA and remainder of the WNH THA will remain closed during this fishing period.** Anadromous stream closures within the portion of the WNH THA open during this fishing period will not be in effect. Effective from 8:00 am, Monday July 9 to 8:00 am, Wednesday, July 11, regulatory closed waters pertaining to the Coghill River, as specified in 5 AAC 24.350(6)(B)), will not be in effect. Commercial fishing will not be permitted within the bed or channel of the Coghill River at any stage of the tide.

A total of 383 sockeye salmon were passed at the Coghill River weir yesterday. Cumulative passage to date is 30,215 sockeye salmon versus a minimum anticipated goal of 9,738 fish. Preliminary estimates of commercial harvest from the 60-hour period that closed on Wednesday, July 4 are 154,800 chum, 47,100 sockeye, and 2,400 pink salmon with 564 deliveries reported. Cumulative CPF harvest estimates to date are 1.09 million chum, 240,700 sockeye, and 2,800 pink salmon. As of July 7, PWSAC estimated 184,000-227,000 chum salmon for WNH broodstock escapement. PWSAC's chum salmon broodstock goal is 216,000 fish.

**ESHAMY DISTRICT:** The Eshamy District, excluding the AGZ shoreward of a line of buoys in front of the barrier net, will open to commercial gillnet harvest for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 9. The AGZ up to a line of buoys in front of the barrier seine will open to DRIFT GILLNET permit holders only during this fishing period. A 48-hour period is anticipated to begin on Thursday, July 12 at 8:00 am. Harvest from the period that closed Wednesday, July 4 was 31,500 chum, 167,100 sockeye, and 4,800 pink salmon with 771 deliveries reported.

**UNAKWIK DISTRICT:** The Unakwik District will open to commercial drift gillnet and purse seine fishing for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 9. Harvest from the 24-hour fishing period that closed on Tuesday, July 3 is confidential.

**SEINE FISHERIES:** Aerial surveys of the Eastern, Northern and Southeastern districts are ongoing. Early season indicators of wild stock chum and pink salmon run entry and escapement in the Northern, Eastern, and Southeastern districts do not support a wild stock fishery at this time. VFDA is in the process of conducting cost recovery for pink salmon in Port Valdez. VFDA reports that pink salmon harvest on Friday, July 6 was approximately 178,400 fish with an average weight of approximately 4.8 pounds per fish and 35% female. The CPF harvest estimate from the 14-hour period in the Eastern District on Wednesday, July 4 is 3 king, 1,328 sockeye, 3 coho, 649,853 pink and 3,071 chum salmon with 178 deliveries reported. ADF&G sampling of CPF harvest from Valdez Arm on July 4 resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 22% female. ADF&G sampling of cost recovery harvest from Entrance Point on July 6 resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 28% female. Cumulative VFDA cost recovery is 3.1 million pounds through July 6, or 70% of a final goal of 4.4 million pounds.

**EASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters in the Eastern District, north of the latitude of Rocky Point, will open to commercial fishing for 14 hours on Sunday, July 8 beginning at 6:00 am. Waters of Galena Bay, Jack Bay, and Sawmill Bay, inside the Salmon Harvest Task Force markers, will be closed during this fishing period. Anadromous stream closures south of a line from Potato Point to Entrance Point **will be in effect** during this fishing period. Anadromous stream closures north of a line from Potato Point to Entrance Point **will not be in effect** during this fishing period. All remaining regulatory closed waters north of a line from Potato Point to Entrance Point **will not be in effect** during this fishing period. All waters of the Valdez small boat harbor and within 50 yards of the entrance to the harbor will be closed to commercial fishing. Waters within 200 yards of the AMHS Valdez Ferry Terminal will also be closed to commercial fishing when the ferry is arriving and departing. Waters inside of a line from the brown oil boom container van located between Solomon Gulch Hatchery and Allison Point, along the yellow SERVS buoys around Solomon Gulch Hatchery to the brown oil boom container east of the hatchery between VFDA and PetroStar will be closed to commercial fishing during this period. Time and area for the next commercial fishing period will be based on cost recovery progress, harvest results from the July 8 fishery, and consideration for broodstock collection progress.

**SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** On the east side of Knight Island, the waters of Marsha Bay, west of 147° 39.75' W. long., will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 60-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 9 and an 84-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 12. Anadromous stream closures within Marsha Bay will not be in effect until further notice. There was no harvest reported for the 60-hour fishing period that ended on Wednesday, July 4.

The waters of Sawmill Bay, including the AFK Hatchery Terminal Harvest Area (THA) and Special Harvest Area (SHA), inside of the newly defined THA line from 60° 03.66' N. lat., 147° 59.11' W. long. to 60° 02.77' N. lat., 148° 01.00' W. long. to 60° 02.76' N. lat., 148° 01.66' W. long. will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 60-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 9 and an 84-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 12. Anadromous stream closures within the AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will not be in effect until further notice. The preliminary harvest estimate from the 60-hour period that ended on Wednesday, July 4 is 4 king, 7,366 sockeye, 7,128 pink and 22,049 chum salmon with 40 deliveries reported.

As a reminder, **all salmon that are harvested but not sold by commercial permit holders in Alaska waters must be reported on a fish ticket at the time of landing (5AAC 39.130(c)(10)).** Fish tickets have a “not sold/personal use” field to report these salmon.

**The next scheduled PURSE SEINE salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Monday, July 9. The next scheduled GILLNET salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Wednesday, July 11.**

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap\\_reporting\\_form.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf) for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf) for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” 16U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an “intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.